



TOLEDO'S COLLECTION

The Museum and its Egyptian collection both began in 1901, a time when archaeology was a rapidly growing field, with the study of Egyptian antiquity occupying a foremost place. An early agency to organize international support for the excavation of ancient sites, the Egypt Exploration Fund, was helped by Mr. Libbey through the Museum, which thus received a number of objects. In 1907-1908, and again in 1924-1925, Mr. and Mrs. Libbey were in Egypt to collect objects reflecting daily life among its ancient peoples.

The collection has grown through later purchases and gifts, including those of Caroline Ransom Williams, the distinguished Egyptologist who advised the Museum in earlier years. More recently, the Museum acquired two pieces of Old

Kingdom sculpture excavated by the Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition begun in 1914. As recently reinstalled, the collection shows objects from every major period of Egyptian history.

This *Museum News* covering the Predynastic era to the end of the Middle Kingdom, is the first of two devoted to Egyptian art in the Toledo collection. The Fall 1971 issue will extend from the New Kingdom to the end of the Roman occupation. All works of art illustrated, unless otherwise noted, have been acquired by funds bequeathed by Edward Drummond Libbey or by his wife, Florence Scott Libbey.

Otto Wittmann, Director

Cover: *Stela of Zezen-nakht*
Stuccoed limestone with polychrome paint
From Nage-ed-Dêr
Early First Intermediate Period, about 2200 B.C.
29½ x 36 in. (74.9 x 91.5 cm.)
47.61

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THE ART OF EGYPT

PART I

No ancient civilization has inspired more fascinated interest than that of Egypt. The ancient Greeks and Romans viewed Egypt as a venerable ancestor much as we today pay cultural homage to Athens and Rome. However, this reverence for the ancient Egyptians has often mixed understanding with misconception and mystery.

This condition is the result of two problems which have greatly influenced man's conception of ancient Egypt. First, understanding of its written language was lost for almost 1500 years. Because early archaeologists could not read hieroglyphs, Egyptian culture, customs and even names were open to guesswork and speculation. In 1822, the French linguist Jean-François Champollion deciphered hieroglyphic writing after 14 years of work on the text of the Rosetta Stone, unearthed during Napoleon's Egyptian campaign of 1799. Few other discoveries in the history of archaeology have more dramatically revealed an ancient civilization to modern knowledge.

A second, more modern problem confuses understanding of Egyptian life. Because the Egyptians believed in the continued life of the soul after death, tombs were filled with objects from everyday life that would aid the deceased in his later existence, thus furnishing many thousands of well-preserved objects which today fill museums throughout the world. However, the funerary origin of these objects has cast the shadow of morbidity over their appreciation. The beauty and grace of many remarkable works of art are today often overlooked because of their association with the practice of mummification and such tomb

furnishings as Canopic jars containing the deceased's viscera. When looking at Egyptian objects, one should remember they were produced by a vigorous society that was not merely a national workshop for royal entombments.

From their beginnings, the Egyptians displayed a marked skill at organizing all aspects of society. Art was no exception to this national trait. Clarity of outline, distinctness of parts, simplicity of form, and a sense of scale dominated Egyptian art for nearly 4000 years. The tediously specific agricultural reports of a provincial nomarch, or governor, to the pharaoh are perfectly paralleled by the rigorous decorative programs of mummy cases and the almost compartmental quality of Egyptian sculpture, while tiny amulet figures are capable of translation into the grandest scale without becoming clumsy.

There are three major periods in which Egyptian civilization rose to a high level of political and cultural power: the Old Kingdom (2780-2280 B.C.), the Middle Kingdom (2134-1625 B.C.) and the New Kingdom (1570-1085 B.C.) Throughout these periods art reflected the eminent political power of Egypt both in scale and quality. Stylistic tenets established in the Old Kingdom were steadfastly preserved until the Roman conquest in 30 B.C. These fundamental artistic formulae, mastered early in Egypt's development, produced an art whose beauty and magnificence were unparalleled for almost 2,500 years.

Kurt T. Luckner

THE PREDYNASTIC ERA (12,000-3200 B.C.)



Figure 1
Black-topped Red Ware Jars and Bowls
Burnished and carbonized earthenware
Upper Egypt
Predynastic Era, 4th millennium B.C.
Max. ht. 15 $\frac{3}{8}$, max. diam. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (39.9, 17.2 cm.)
27.144; 27.148; 15.78; 06.213
Gift of Caroline Ransom Williams (27.144)
Gift of Egypt Exploration Fund (15.78)

During the early Paleolithic Age, before 12,000 B.C., the first tribes of nomadic hunters began moving into the then grassy plains that spread out from the banks of the Nile. These plains, well watered by the Nile's tributaries, supported the wild game on which these early hunters subsisted.

However, toward 8,000 B.C., as the climate became more arid, settlements tended to cluster along the Nile itself. Although numerous implements and tools of this period have been found, these were not yet decorated.

During the Neolithic period, beginning about 5,000 B.C., great steps were taken towards creating a social environment in which art could begin to flourish. Agriculture replaced nomadic hunting as the basis of survival. Man now began to settle in one location and to forsake his earlier wanderings. Animals were domesticated, and permanent



Figure 2
White on Red Ware Bowls
Earthenware with painted decoration
Upper Egypt
Predynastic Era, 4th millennium B.C.
Max. ht. 3, max. diam. 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (7.6, 16.8 cm.)
17.743; 27.149
Gift of Caroline Ransom Williams (27.149)

houses began to be grouped into villages. The need for food and clothing sparked the two basic crafts of pottery and weaving in which the earliest decoration is already surprisingly developed.

The need for controlling the yearly overflow of the Nile, for creating an irrigation system and for systematically reclaiming farmland from swamps, required a concerted effort from Paleolithic men working together in organized groups. This fundamental quality of organization placed these forerunners of the Egyptians far in advance of other cultures in Africa and the ancient Near East. Because natural circumstances compelled a high degree of organization, this basic trait implanted itself early in the development of Egyptian civilization, permeating every aspect of its life for millennia to come.

The final phase of the prehistoric era in Egypt,



Figure 3
Cosmetic Palettes
Slate
Predynastic Era, 4th millennium B.C.
Max. length $14\frac{1}{4}$, max. width $4\frac{1}{8}$ in. (36.2, 10.3 cm.)
06.175; 06.176

the Chalcolithic (Copper and Iron) Age, extended from 4000 B.C. to the beginning of the historic era about 3200 B.C. Two distinct groups dominated this last predynastic phase: a southern culture with African origins, and a northern people associated with the Asiatic and Mediterranean lands north and east of Egypt.

The grave sites of the southern region, called Upper Egypt, have yielded numerous pottery vessels of simple, yet elegant shapes. One type is known as black-topped red ware (Figure 1). Made of brown river clay with a red slip and burnished by abrasion with pebbles, the tops of these pots were blackened by carbonization in the kiln to produce the desired color. Their varied, flowing contours and warm sheen witness the sophisticated craftsmanship of the 4th Millennium B.C. Another group from Upper Egypt (Figure 2) also



Figure 4
Brown on Buff Ware Storage Jars
Earthenware with slip decorations
Lower Egypt
Predynastic Era, 4th millennium B.C.
Max. ht. $8\frac{3}{4}$, max. diam. $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. (22.2, 21.6 cm.)
06.215; 43.53; 06.214
Gift of Caroline Ransom Williams (43.53)

shows the notable refinement present in even the most functional vessels at this early date. Composed of the same brown clay as the black-topped red wares, these vessels were covered first with a burnished red slip, then decorated with simple, linear geometric patterns in cream-colored paint. Many of these designs seem to mimic the woven patterns of basketry from which these early potters may have borrowed their decorative schemes.

The practice of applying decorative paint to the eyes and face, customary for both men and women at this time, created the need for cosmetic palettes, some in fanciful shapes, such as that of the hippopotamus (Figure 3). Each palette was carefully smoothed, and a shallow depression in the surface served as a grinding and mixing area for the cosmetic pigments malachite (green) or galena (black).



Figure 5
Wavy-Handled Jars
 Earthenware with (right) slip decoration
 Lower Egypt
 Predynastic Era, 4th millennium B.C.
 Max. ht. $9\frac{1}{4}$, max. diam. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. (23.5, 14 cm.)
 15.75; 27.146
 Gift of Egypt Exploration Fund (15.75)
 Gift of Caroline Ransom Williams (27.146)

The late predynastic culture of northern, or Lower Egypt, was quite distinct from its southern contemporary. Because of its proximity to the Mediterranean, Lower Egypt was in a position to exchange objects and, more importantly, ideas with its Mediterranean and Near Eastern neighbors; thus its predynastic peoples were far more advanced than their brothers to the south.

The pottery of Lower Egypt, quite distinct from that of Upper Egypt during the late predynastic period, employs a buff desert clay without a cover slip. Often these buff-colored vessels were decorated with dark reddish-brown geometric patterns (Figure 4). Although reminiscent of the shapes of the pottery of Upper Egypt, the northern decorated wares have bolder profiles. These shapes give the vessels a swelling and varied mass to which the painted decoration is related. It is not by accident that the largest scaled decorative patterns on each vessel occur at the broadest area of the diameters, i.e. the shoulders of the vessels. A reasoned relationship between scale of decoration and mass characterizes pottery in most developing civilizations.

Another type of the buff wares is spherical, with tubular handles through which thongs or cords were inserted to carry the vessel (Figure 4, bottom). The body is decorated with coil and line motifs (also common in most pottery of primitive civilizations), while the lip has a cross-hatched pattern

reminiscent of basketry.

A second class of Chalcolithic pottery from Lower Egypt includes the "wavy-handled" jars (Figure 5). The evolution of these vessels is of special interest as it may be traced from the late 4th millennium through Dynasties I and II. The earliest were storage jars with two wavy, handle-like protuberances flanking the shoulder. It is not clear whether these were actual handles or simply ornamental devices on an otherwise undecorated jar.

Gradually, these handle-like forms grew less imposing and became a scallop-like banding around the upper part of the jars, which had developed into a decorated vessel of cylindrical shape. The evolution of this group was the basis of an early attempt at sequence dating for predynastic objects by the noted Egyptologist, Sir Flinders Petrie.

About 3200 B.C., King Narmer (or Menes) of Upper Egypt subdued the northern Kingdom of the Delta and united the two warring factions under one rule. This event was of unprecedented political and cultural significance, for the Narmer Palette in the Cairo Museum which records this unification, as well as Narmer's name, bears the earliest known hieroglyph. At this point, not only was the First Dynasty in the long sequence of Egyptian rulers established, but the age of the written record—and thus the historic era—had begun.

THE EARLY DYNASTIC PERIOD (DYNASTIES I AND II, 3200-2780 B.C.)

With the establishment of Dynasty I, Egypt moved towards achieving a stable society. Of foremost importance was the realization that the forces of nature could be controlled and even predicted. Organization in the early dynastic period was based on understanding of the Nile as not only a source of the staples of life, but also as the link by which the kingdom could be united. Once communications with the provinces were regularly established, the military and political authority of the pharaoh was secure. Political unity depended on recognition of the pharaoh as supreme ruler, and the establishment of a hereditary throne assured the smooth transfer of power from one ruler to his successor.

The Egyptians now made epochal advances. The written language was established, and an agrarian calendar based on the rise and fall of the Nile was formed, with the year composed of 365 days, divided into four groups of three months each, with five extra days occurring at the end of the year.

The advances of Dynasties I and II are clearly reflected in objects of daily life. Compared to their predynastic counterparts, they show a level of accomplishment previously unknown in Egyptian art. An alabaster vase (Figure 6) dating from Dynasty I or II, a descendent of the predynastic class of "wavy-handled" pottery jars, displays just such refined craftsmanship. Although stone had long been used for vessels, its adoption for the "wavy-handled" class was an early dynastic invention. The skillful use of veining enlivens the severe shape, which markedly departs from that of its ceramic ancestors. The pronounced handles of the early clay vessels, later evolved into a scalloped band, have here become an elegantly turned rope moulding below the lip. In all respects this vase displays a degree of sophistication unapproached by its ancestors. The salient contribution of the early dynastic era lies in the evolution from common tradition of a coherent style expressed by brilliantly executed objects.

Figure 6

Jar

Alabaster

Dynasty I or II, 3200 to 2780 B.C.

Ht. 9¾, diam. 4¼ in. (24.7, 10.7 cm.)

43.52

Gift of Caroline Ransom Williams



THE OLD KINGDOM

(DYNASTIES III-VI, 2780-2280 B.C.)



Figure 7
Relief of Akhet-hotep
Limestone with traces of polychrome paint
From the mastaba of Akhet-hotep in the Northern Cemetery at Sakkara
Early Dynasty IV, 2680-2560 B.C.
39 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 in. (10.1 x 35.6 cm.)
59.39

The advances of the Early Dynastic Period led to the political and artistic flowering of Egypt's first great era, the Old Kingdom, during which Egypt achieved a level of power and preeminence hitherto unprecedented in the ancient world. It was then that the colossal Pyramids and Sphinx of Giza were erected to witness the power and majesty of the Old Kingdom rulers.

During Dynasty IV (2680-2560 B.C.), a highly organized government became centered upon the person of the pharaoh as a divine king. He personally appointed and supervised the many officials, viziers, and departmental officers, providing for them during their lifetimes, as well as for their burials and funeral offerings. Frequently, those officials closest to the pharaoh were appointed from his own family or household.

The principal form of burial structure for the Old Kingdom official was the mastaba, a rectangular subterranean structure, numbers of which were arranged in orderly groupings around the more imposing tomb of the pharaoh. At ground level, the mastaba appeared as a rectangular mound with slightly inclined masonry walls. The interior contained three main rooms: the subterranean burial chamber or shaft, the offering chapel, and the serdab, or chamber for the statue of the deceased. Part of the walls from the mastaba offering chapel of the Administrator Akhet-hotep are now in the collection at Toledo (Figs. 7 and 8). This mastaba, first discovered by Auguste Mariette in 1861, was one of many in the Northern Cemetery at Sakkara built around the tomb of the pharaoh under whom he served. This may have been King Sneferuw (about 2680-2556 B.C.), founder of Dynasty IV. Three other reliefs from the same offering chapel are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum.

The two Toledo reliefs show the figure of Akhet-hotep in the traditional role of an Old Kingdom official carrying a long walking stick in one hand, and the 'aba, or scepter of authority, in the other. He wears a short kilt and is barefoot, indicating he is walking on sacred ground. The hieroglyphs on the larger relief (Fig. 8) give his name and titles, and those in front of Akhet-hotep's face record his name. Although less of the second relief (Fig. 7) is preserved, it is possible to accurately reconstruct the inscription, which reads from left to right,

'Official of the Royal Palace, Akhet-hotep', and 'Administrator of the Central Estate', indicating that Akhet-hotep was the highest official of a crown farm that was the administrative seat of all royal farms in a nome, or district. The meaning of 'Ka priest' is unclear, as it is not certain for whose ka, or soul, Akhet-hotep was the priest. Perhaps he was a priest for the king's ka. 'Official of the Royal Palace' simply means Akhet-hotep was an important royal official.

The pervasiveness of architectural organization in Egyptian art is particularly apparent in these reliefs. First, the hieroglyphic characters in the upper left of Figure 8 recall architectural ground plans. Then, the raised outlining and rectangular compartments into which the entire reliefs are divided again suggest floor plans. Thirdly, each relief is outlined with a raised border acting as a retaining wall for each composition. This component approach indicates the tendency toward systematic organization that was first expressed in architecture and then extended to schematized writing and sculpture.

This method of organization extends to the Egyptian sculptor's representation of the human figure itself. Each anatomical member of the human body in these reliefs stands separately in its most readily recognizable position. Thus, the head is in profile, the eye is frontal, and the shoulders are frontal. The representation of the figure is thereby governed by the same rules as those of architecture. Each component is individually formed and then "erected" into a complete figure just as is a building. These visual and conceptual approaches therefore spring from the same source: the Egyptians' natural tendency towards order and structure.



Figure 8
Relief of Akhet-hotep
Limestone with traces of polychrome paint
From the mastaba of Akhet-hotep in the Northern Cemetery at Sakkara
Early Dynasty IV, 2680-2560 B.C.
37 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 22 in. (96.2 x 55.9 cm.)
59.40



Two reliefs from a later mastaba illustrate the funerary function of the offering chamber (Figs. 9 and 10). Dating from late Dynasty V (2560-2420 B.C.), they are from the tomb of the official Khent-en-Ka in the Royal Cemetery at Giza. The Toledo reliefs are sections of a false door stela (a rectangular, monolithic slab erected beside or within a wall) comprising the back wall of the offering chamber. A visitor to the tomb would place food and perfumes in front of the false door, so named because the arrangement of this wall of the offering chamber was based on the architectural program of early Egyptian palace facades, the doorway here having been transformed into a narrow walled-up slit through which the deceased, in his ka statue in the serdab behind the offering chamber, might appreciate the aromas from offerings placed in front of the false door.

A complete stela of this very date is to be found in the mastaba of Pery-neb in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and judging from joins between the limestone blocks in that stela, the Toledo reliefs probably comprised the outer vertical sections of the false door, with Khent-en-Ka shown standing on either side facing the opening. His skin is painted brownish-red, the traditional manner of indicating a man. He wears a long wig, collarpiece and starched kilt that protrudes in front, and holds a long walking stick and rolled linen handkerchief. The formal posture is that established in the Old Kingdom to convey author-

Figure 9
Relief from the false door stela of Khent-en-Ka
Limestone with polychrome paint
From the mastaba of Khent-en-Ka at Giza
Late Dynasty V, 2560-2420 B.C.
60⁵/₈ x 14¹/₂ in. (54 x 36.8 cm.)
25.523

ity. In contrast to the reliefs of Akhet-hotep, the Khent-en-Ka reliefs are executed in the technique of sunken relief, with the sculptor having both cut his forms below the surface of the stone, and taken full advantage of the rounding effects of light and shadow.

Above Khent-en-Ka are three columns of hieroglyphs. Although both upper sections are partly lost, the entire inscription may be reconstructed from similar reliefs. The outermost row (left in Fig. 9, right in Fig. 10) is a prayer to Anubis that he may grant an excellent old age and burial in the Necropolis in the Western Desert. The center rows are a prayer for offerings to Khent-en-Ka during the Feasts of Thoth, Uag, Sokaris and every other feast eternally. The inner rows (right in Fig. 9, left in Fig. 10) are a plea for Khent-en-Ka as one who is devoted to the King and admitted to the secrets of his private cabinet. This is a type of inscription which comprises dutifully repeated formulae found in many Old Kingdom tombs. However, such repetition does not indicate any loss of meaning for Old Kingdom Egyptians, but rather shows the intensity of their desire for immortality. These litanies appeal to the living not to forget the deceased in the afterlife. Even though provisions were placed inside the tomb for the use of the deceased, offerings and prayers made by the living in front of the false door were essential to keeping alive his memory on earth.



Figure 10
Relief from the false door stela of Khent-en-Ka
Limestone with polychrome paint
From the mastaba of Khent-en-Ka at Giza
Late Dynasty V, 2560-2420 B.C.
55½ x 13 in. (41 x 33 cm.)
25.524



Figure 11
Rerem and Ankhet
Limestone with polychrome paint
From mastaba G2099 at Giza
Dynasty VI, 2420 to 2280 B.C.
ht. $22\frac{1}{2}$, width (at base) $14\frac{1}{4}$, depth (at base) $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(57.2 x 36.2 x 14 cm.)
49.4

Tomb statues of private persons in the Old Kingdom were usually reserved for royal officials or others of high rank. Statues or statuettes of this type made in the royal workshops were often given by the pharaoh to an individual for his tomb. As wood was scarce, limestone was the usual material for sculpture. These portrait statues were the home of the deceased's ka, or soul, in the serdab of the mastaba. The representational quality of these figures does not conform to our idea of portraiture as a likeness of the sitter. The ancient Egyptian wanted himself represented for eternity, without



Figure 12
King Mycerinus and Queen Kha-merer-nebty
Slate
Dynasty IV, 2680 to 2560 B.C.
Ht. 55 in., (39.7 cm.)
Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

the accidents of age or infirmity. Thus, these statues have an idealized quality which places accuracy of likeness in a secondary role.

Two statuettes of this type came to the Museum's collection from the northern edge of the Western Cemetery at Giza. They were found in mastaba G2099 by the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts Egyptian Expedition of 1904-1932, and portray Rerem, an official of Dynasty VI. Both statuettes, which were found in the serdab, are inscribed and are typical of private portraiture in

the Old Kingdom. One portrays Rerem and his wife Ankhet (Fig. 11). It is reinforced by a flat slab carved in one piece with the two figures, whose separate names appear on the slab to the right of each. Rerem and Ankhet stand in a stiff, frontal pose. Both men and women at this time cut their own hair close to their heads and wore wigs in public. Rerem wears a rounded wig composed of square-cut overlapping locks. His linen kilt wraps around and is secured by a waistband. The curved end of the kilt is neatly pleated in front. The blunt ends of rolled linen handkerchiefs, perhaps fly-whisks, can be seen in his clenched hands. Ankhet wears a fuller, shoulder-length wig and a long, tight-fitting linen dress which extends from just above the ankles to a V-neckline supported by tapered shoulder straps. Women's clothes at this time were dyed in bright colors and bold patterns and were often overlaid with networks of colored beads.

This type of double statuette can be traced back to the famous statue of King Mycerinus and Queen Kha-merer-nebty in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 12), which established a type used for private figures for generations to come. Thus, even though the Toledo couple is some 200 years later in date and shows variations from the Boston couple the connection is clear. The figures of man and wife are now reversed: the wife's right hand rests on her husband's shoulder, while her left arm is at her side.

This relationship between the Boston and Toledo pairs underlines the fact that poses for private statues were derived from royal statue prototypes. This can be further explained by recalling that the royal sculpture workshops were programmed to produce royal statues of accepted poses and types. The Boston Mycerinus and his Queen is the earliest known example of one of these types and the Toledo statue exemplifies its counterpart in the tomb of a royal official.

The second statuette of Rerem (Fig. 13) shows him in a seated pose that is derived also from royal prototypes. Excavated in the same serdab as the double portrait, this figure shows Rerem in the same apparel as that in which he appears with Ankhet. The block on which Rerem sits bears four inscriptions. In front, and to the left of his right leg: 'Purifying Priest of the King, Priest of Cheops in all his places, Rerem.' To the right of his left leg: 'Kinsman of the King, Assistant Supervisor of the Crown Tenants, Rerem.' On the side of the block to his right, together with a man holding up a censer, 'His beloved son, Purification Priest, . . . , Priest of Cheops, Supervisor of the Crown Tenants,

Ka-her-set-f.' On the side of the block to his left, together with a young woman: 'His beloved daughter, the Supervisor of the Crown Tenants, Theset.'

The title 'Priest of Cheops' referring to both father and his son poses an interesting question. As Rerem and Ka-her-set-f lived well over two centuries after the reign of Cheops, why should that pharaoh's name appear in the Rerem inscription? As both Rerem and his son bore this title, it probably indicates an hereditary position as priest of the ka of the great Cheops.

The form of both Rerem statuettes is characteristic of Old Kingdom sculpture. The blocky shapes give the figures solidity and recall the stone blocks from which they were carved. The principles characterizing the reliefs of Akhet-hotep also apply to these statues. Not only do the Rerem figures have an architectural blockiness, but their anatomical parts are compiled in the same building-block manner.

Figure 13

Rerem

Limestone with polychrome paint

From mastaba G2099 at Giza

Dynasty VI, 2420 to 2280 B.C.

Ht. 20, width 7³/₄, depth 13¹/₈ in. (50.8 x 19.7 x 33.3 cm.)

49.5



THE FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

(2280-2052 B.C.)



Figure 14
Stela of Zezen-nakht
Stuccoed limestone with polychrome paint
From Naga-ed-Dêr
Early First Intermediate Period, about 2200 B.C.
29½ x 36 in. (74.9 x 91.4 cm.)
47.61

The end of Dynasty VI brought the collapse of the Old Kingdom, though the beginnings of its downfall may be traced back as early as Dynasty IV. The pharaoh's power had rested on his being viewed as an all-powerful god by his subjects, especially the landed nobility and nomarchs. Once this belief was upset, the system collapsed. Royal wealth had been lavished on colossal building projects that impoverished the kingdom, and officials were bribed to secure their favor. The result was to undermine the ruler's wealth and prestige, the dis-

tance between the power of provincial nomarchs and that of the king lessening to the point where the pharaoh now sought in vain to maintain his waning authority. Civil war broke out and foreigners—the Bedawin of Sinai and southern Palestine—invaded the Delta. The nomes of Upper Egypt seceded, and revolution with attendant famine, lawlessness and social upheaval ensued.

These troubled times are witnessed by a stela of about 2200 B.C. (late Dynasty VI or early in the

First Intermediate Period) in the Toledo collection (Cover and Fig. 14). The stela is that of Zezen-nakht, the overseer of the army under Pepy II (late Dynasty VI). As the nomarchs of this time no longer chose to be buried in the royal cemetery, but rather in their own provinces, it is not surprising that this stela is from Naga-er-Dêr in Middle Egypt. The hieroglyphs are in six registers placed above symbols representing offerings of food and drink to the deceased, reading from top left: '(1) An offering which the king gives (to) Anubis, he who is upon his mountain, he who is bandaged, lord of the Necropolis, that the voice may go forth (with) bread and beer for (2) the Hereditary Prince, Nomarch, Overseer of the Army, he according to whose voice (advice) (3) the people speak on the day of the great council, (4) Zezen-nakht: (He) says, I am (one) beloved of his father, (5) praised of his mother, whom his brothers and sisters love, (6) I am (one) beloved of his offspring, pleasant to his family.' 'Hereditary Prince' indicates that the title of nomarch was no longer a direct royal appointment, the rule of the provinces now passing from father to son with only minimal recognition of the weakened power of the pharaoh.

Every wealthy official had models of numerous objects from everyday life placed in his tomb to assure happiness and well-being in the afterlife. As a riverside dweller who relied on the Nile for most transportation, it is natural that the ancient

Egyptian would want a model of a boat for his tomb. Figure 15 is an example of the large number of tomb boats produced from the VIth to the XIIth Dynasties (2280 to 1991 B.C.), two groups of which may be distinguished: models of those used in daily life, and representations of mythical barks, particularly that of the Sun God. The Toledo model represents the first group, and is made in three pieces, the main part of the hull being one solid block of wood, the prow and stern made separately and dowelled in place. The six rowers are each made in one piece, with separate arms dowelled on at the shoulders. The boat is painted red, blue-green, and white. The vertical wave-marks on the hull are exceptional and recall plants painted on the sides of Middle Kingdom ceramic figures of hippopotami.

In early Egypt, boats of bound papyrus reed were used both on the Nile and for bird hunting and spear fishing in the marshes. Later, wooden boats conforming in shape to the frail reed vessels, came into use. The Toledo model is after this wooden type. There is no indication that it ever had a mast or steering gear, and the shallow hull and positioning of the rowers' arms indicate it was a sporting craft that was paddled rather than rowed through the shallow waters of the marshes. Dowel holes in the deck were for the now-missing figures of a pilot at the stern and a spear fisherman or lookout in the prow.

Figure 15
Tomb model of a boat
Wood with polychrome paint
Dynasties VI to XII, 2280 to 1991 B.C.
Ht. with rowers 5½, length 36½ in. (14, 92.7 cm.)
27.138
Gift of Henry H. Wilhelm



THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

(DYNASTIES XI-XII, 2040-1991 B.C.)

In the course of Dynasty XI (2040-1991 B.C.) the establishment of the Middle Kingdom marked a return of centralized power. King Montuhotpe II (2061-2010 B.C.) of Thebes in Upper Egypt managed first to subdue both local warring factions and the forces of Lower Egypt and then to re-establish stable domestic rule. Thus the rulers of Thebes ascended the throne of Egypt, which now became once again an international political and trading power. Egyptian influence extended to the Sinai Peninsula, Palestine, and Syria, and a statue of a Middle Kingdom official has been found at Knossos on Crete.

As the Middle Kingdom was relatively short, objects and monuments from this period are fewer than are those of the Old and New Kingdoms. The art of the Middle Kingdom is distinct in character from that of other periods in Egyptian art. Reliefs show a curious blend of Old Kingdom style with newer local styles developed during more than two centuries of rule by provincial nomarchs. Middle Kingdom art is less uniform and balanced than that of the Old Kingdom. It was a period of experimentation and revival of older forms. Despite this diversity, certain common characteristics may be found in art of this period. Reliefs and paintings often reveal a robust harshness in their elongated and angular figures.

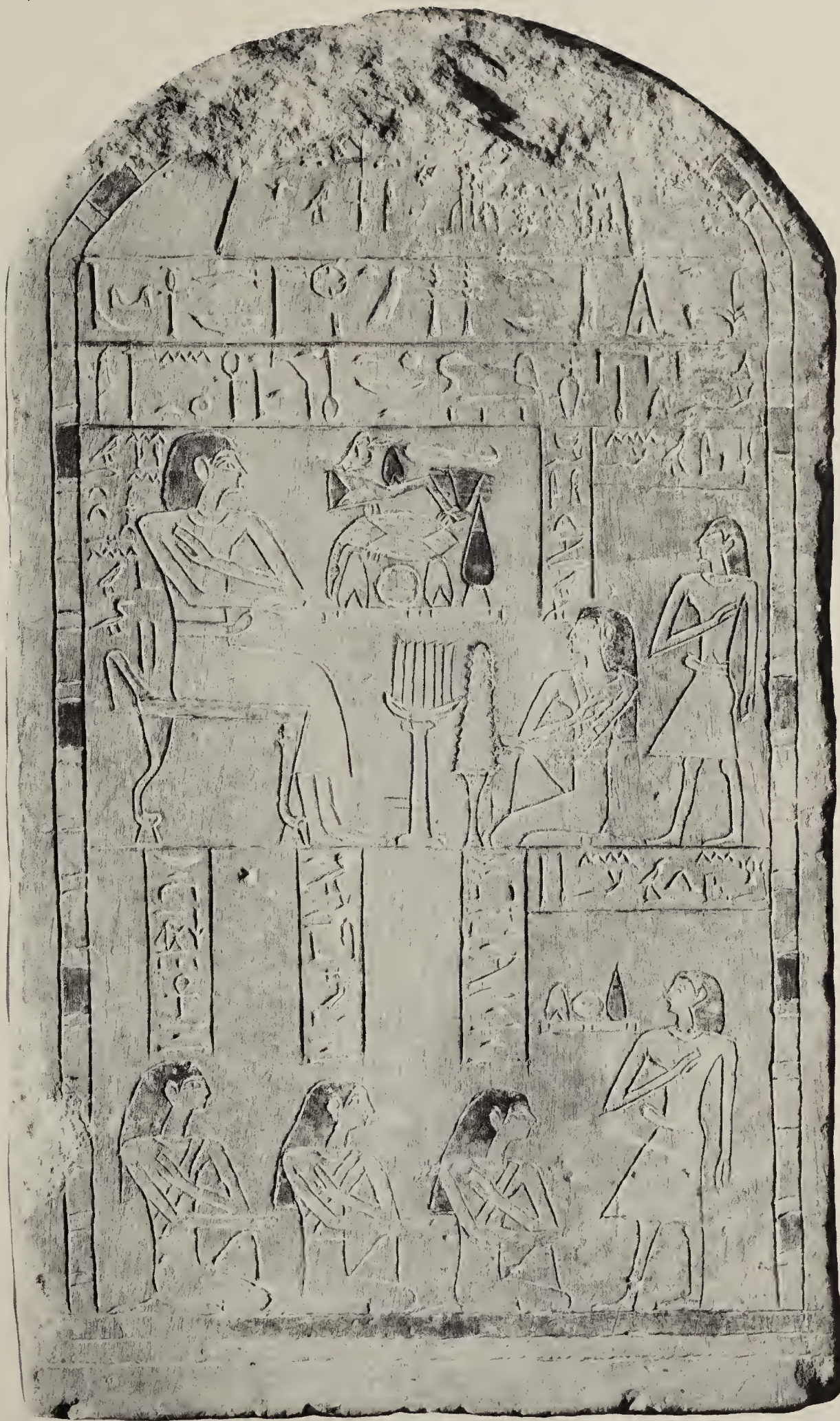
These characteristics may be seen in the stela of Sisenbu dating from Dynasties XII to XIII (about 1991-1600 B.C.) (Fig. 16). The deceased sits at this funeral banquet which is set before him. His wife,

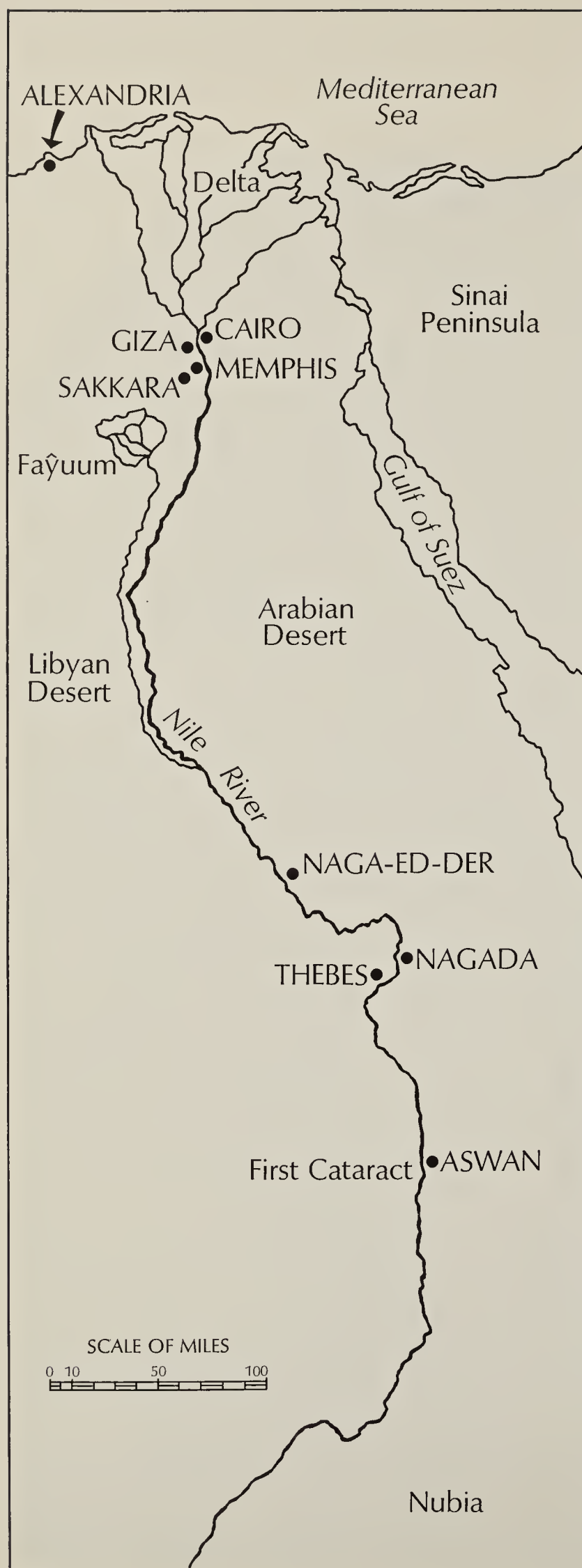
Yameru, crouches before the offering tables in humble respect to her husband. The other figures represent servants and supervisors of Sisenbu's household who are engaged in the various duties of preparing foods for offering. Above Sisenbu is a two-line prayer to Osiris, god of the Lower Realms, for offerings and all good things on which a god is wont to live.' The inscription continues to say that Sisenbu was the head of one of the bureaus of ten officers, each having control of public works, taxation and census records.

The use of sunken relief in this stela shows a marked departure from Old Kingdom examples. Figure outlines are hard and linear. The softening, rounding shadows of Old Kingdom reliefs have now become merely reinforcements of outlines.

Dynasty XIII marks a further era of political weakness and foreign invasion known as the Second Intermediate Period. Foremost among the troubles of this time was the invasion of the Delta by the Western Asiatic peoples known as the Hyksos who established a capital at Avaris in the Delta. The period of Hyksos domination during Dynasties XV and XVI is a chapter of Egyptian history which is still obscure, for even the sequence of its kings is disputed, and few monuments have survived to shed light on this mysterious 'Dark Age.' It was not until Dynasty XVII that the Egyptians expelled the Hyksos and inaugurated the New Kingdom. The Fall 1971 issue of *Museum News* will be devoted to the art of this and later periods in the Toledo collection.

Figure 16
Stela of Sisenbu
Limestone with polychrome paint
Dynasties XII to XIII, about 1991 to 1600 B.C.
Max. ht. $21\frac{1}{8}$, max. width $12\frac{1}{4}$, max. depth $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(53.7, 31.1, 8.9 cm.)
06.23





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